THE Nicker Nicked:

OR, THE

CHEATS OF GAMING DISCOVERED.

The Third Edition.

Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.

Licensed,

Novemb. 4th, 1668.

LONDON,

Printed in the Year, 1668.

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LEATHERMORES Advice;

CONCERNING

GAMING.

Gaming is an enchanting Witchery, begot betwixt Idleneſs and Avarice; which has this ill property above all other Vices, that it renders a man incapable of proſecuting any ſerious Action; and makes him alwaies unſatisfied with his own Condition; he is either lifted up to the top of mad joy with ſucceſs; or plung'd to the bottom of deſpair by misfortune; alwaies in extreams, alwaies in a ſtorm.

Hannibal ſaid of *Marcellus*, that *Nec bonam nec malam ferre poteſt*, he could be quiet neither Conqueror nor Conquered: Thus (ſuch is the itch of play) Gameſters neither winning nor looſing can reſt ſatisfied; if they win, they think to win more; if they loſe, they hope to recover.

One propounded this Queſtion, Whether men in Ships at Sea were to be accounted among the Living or the Dead, becauſe there were but few in-

ches betwixt them and Drowning. The ſame Quære may be made of great Gameſters, though their Eſtates be never ſo conſiderable, Whether they are to be eſteemed poor or rich, ſince there are but a few caſts at Dice, betwixt a Perſon of Fortune (in that Circumſtance) and a Beggar?

But ſpeculation in this particular will not be convincing, unleſs we ſhew ſomewhat of the modern practiſe; we muſt therefore lay our Scene at the *Ordinary*, and proceed to our *Action*.

Betwixt twelve and one of the Clock a good Dinner is prepar'd by way of Ordinary, and ſome Gentlemen of Civility and Condition ofttimes eat there, and play a while for recreation after Dinner, both moderately and moſt commonly without deſerving reproof.

Towards night, when Ravenous Beaſts uſually ſeek their Prey, there comes in ſhoals of *Hectors*, *Trappanners*, *Guilts*, *Pads*, *Biters*, *Prigs*, *Divers*, *Lifters*, *Kid-Nappers*, *Vouchers*, *Mill-kens*, *Pymen*, *Decoys*, *Shop-Lifters*, *Foilers*, *Bulkers*, *Droppers*, *Famblers*, *Donnakers*, *Crosbyters*, &c. Under the general appellation of *Rooks*; and in this particular it ſerves as a Nurſery for *Tiburn*, for every year ſome of this Gang march thither: One *Millard* was hang'd in *April*. 1664. for Burglary, and others ſince.

When

When a young Gentleman or Prentice comes into this School of Vertue, unskil'd in the quibbles and devices there practiced, they call him a *Lamb*, then a *Rook* (who is properly the *Woolf*) follows him close, and engages him in advantagious Bets, and at length worryes him, that is, gets all his Money, and then they smile and say, *the Lamb is bitten.*

Of these Rooks some will be very importunate to borrow Money of you, without any intention of repaying, or to go with you 7 to 12, half a Crown, and take it ill if they are refused, others watch, if when you are serious at your Game, your Sword hang loose behind, and lift that away; others will not scruple if they spye an opportunity, directly to pick your Pocket, yet if all fail, some will nim off the Gold Buttons of your Cloak, or steal the Cloak it self if it lye loose, others will throw at a summe of Money with a *dry fist* (as they call it) that is, if they nick you, 'tis theirs, if they lose, they owe you so much, with many other Quillets; or if you chance to nick them, 'tis odds they wait your comming out at night and beat you, as one *Cock* was served in *June*, 1664.

Blaspheming, Drunkenness, and Swearing, are here so familiar; that Civility is by the rule of contraries accounted a Vice. I do not mean Swearing when there is occasion to attest a Truth, but upon no occasion, or rather all occasions; As *God Damm me, how dost? What a Clock is it by God?* &c.

Then before two hours are at an end, ſome one who has been heated with Wine, or made Cholerick with loſs of his Money, raiſes a Quarrel, Swords are drawn, and perhaps the boxes and Candleſticks thrown at one another; and all the Houſe in a Garboyle, forming a perfect Type of Hell.

Wou'd you imagine it to be true? that a grave Gentleman well ſtricken in years, in ſo much as he cannot ſee the pip's of the Dice, is ſo infatuated with this Witchery, as to play here with others eyes, of whom this Quibble was rais'd, *That* Mr.——, *ſuch a one plays at Dice by the Ear.* Another Gentleman ſtark blind, I have ſeen play at Hazzard, and ſure that muſt be by the Ear too.

Late at night when the Company grows thin, and your eyes dim with watching, falſe dice are often put upon the ignorant, or they are otherwiſe coſened with topping, or ſlurring, *&c.* And if you be not vigilant, the Box-keeper ſhall ſcore you up double or trebble Boxes, and though you have loſt your Money, dun you as ſeverely for it, as if it were the juſteſt debt in the World.

There are yet ſome gentiler and more ſubtile Rooks, whom you ſhall not diſtinguiſh by their outward demeanor from perſons of Condition: and who will ſit by, a whole evening, and obſerve who wins; and then if the Winner be bubbleable, they will inſi-

nuate

nuate themselves into his acquaintance, and civilly invite him to drink a glass of Wine, wheadle him into play and win all his Money, either by false dice, as high Fullams, low Fullams, 5, 4, 2, 5. *&c.* Or by Palming, Topping, Knapping, or Slurring; Or in case he be past that Classis of Ignoramusses, then by Crossbyting, or some other dexterity, of which they have variety unimaginable; Note by the way, that when they have you at the Tavern and think you a sure *Bubble*, they will many times purposely lose some small summe to you the first time, to engage you more freely to Bleed (as they call *it*) at the second meeting, to which they will be sure to invite you.

A Gentleman whom ill Fortune had hurried into Passion, took a Box and Dice to a side Table and there fell to throwing by himself, at length swears with an Emphasis, ——— *Damme, now I throw for nothing, I can winne a thousand pounds; but when I play for Money, I loose my Arse.*

If the House find you free to the Box and a constant Caster, you shall be Treated below with Suppers at night, and Cawdle in the morning, and have the Honour to be styled, *A Love of the House*, whilst your Money lasts, which certainly will not be long; For as the *Lamiæ* destroy'd men, under pretense of kindness, so 'tis here.

In

In a word, this course of life shall afford you so many Affronts, and such a number of vexations, as shall in time convert both your Soul and Body into *Anguish*, and *Anguish* in some has turn'd to madness. Thus one *Bull*, a young fellow not many years since, had by strange Fortune runne up a very small summe to fifteen hundred pounds, and put himself into a Garb accordingly, could not give over, plaid on, fortune turn'd, lost it all, run mad, and so dyed.

If what has been said will not make you detest this abominable kind of life, will the almost certain losse of your Money do it? I'le undertake to demonstrate, that 'tis ten to one you shall be a loser at the years end with constant Play upon the square.——If then 20 persons bring 200 *l.* apiece, which makes 4000 *l.* and resolve to play; for example, three or four hours a day for a year; I'le wager the Box shall have 1500 *l.* of the Money, and that 18 of the 20 persons shall be losers.

I have seen (in a lower instance) three persons sit down at twelve penny *Inn* and *Inn*, and each draw 40 shillings apiece, and in little more than two hours, the Box has had 3 *l.* of the Money, and all the three Gamesters have been loosers, and laugh'd at for their indiscretion.

At an *Ordinary* you shall scarce have a night pass without a quarrel, and you must either tame-

ly

ly put up an Affront, or else be engag'd in a Duel next morning, upon some trifling insignificant occasion, pretended to be a point of Honour.

Most Gamesters begin at small game, and by degrees, if their Money or Estates hold out, they rise to great summs; some have plaid first all their Money, then their Rings, Coach and Horses, even their wearing Cloaths, and Perry-wiggs, and then such a Farme, and at last perhaps a Lordship. You may read in our Histories how Sir *Miles Partridge* plaid at dice with King *Henry the 8th.* for *Jesus Bells*, so called, which were the greatest in *England*, and hung in a Tower of St. *Pauls* Church, and won them; whereby he brought them to ring in his pocket: but the ropes afterwards catch'd about his neck, for in *Edward* the sixths days he was hang'd for some criminal offences. *Stows Survey.* P. 357.

Consider how many persons have been ruin'd by play, Sir *Arthur Smithouse* is yet fresh in memory, he had a fair Estate, which in a few years he so lost at play, that he dyed in great want and penury. Since that, Mr. *Baker* who was a Clerk in the six Clerks Office and well cliented, fell to play, won by extraordinary fortune 2000 pieces in ready Gold; was not content with that, play'd on, lost all he had won, and almost all his own Estate, sold his place in the Office, and at last marched off to a forraign Plantation, to begin a new world with the sweat of his brow: For that is com-

monly the deſtiny of a decayed Gameſter, either to go to ſome forraign Plantation, or to be preferr'd to the Dignity of a Box-keeper.

It is not deny'd but moſt Gameſters have at one time or other a conſiderable run of winning, but (ſuch is the infatuation of Play) I could never hear of the Man that gave over a winner, (I mean to give over, as never to play again) I am ſure 'tis *rara avis*; For if you once break bulk (as they phraſe it) you are in again for all. Sir *Humphry Foſter* had loſt the greateſt part of his Eſtate, and then playing, as 'tis ſaid, for a dead Horſe, did by happy Fortune recover it again, then gave over, and wiſely too.

If a Man have a competent Eſtate of his own, and plays whether himſelf or another Man ſhall have it, 'tis extreme folly: If his Eſtate be ſmall, then to hazzard the loſs even of that, and reduce himſelf to abſolute beggery, is direct madneſs. Beſides it has been generally obſerv'd, that the loſs of one hundred pounds ſhall doe you more prejudice, in diſquieting your mind, than the gain of two hundred pounds ſhall doe you good, were you ſure to keep it.

Conſider alſo your loſs of time which is invaluable, and remember what *Seneca* ſays——*Nulla major eſt jactura, quam temporis amiſsio.*

Laſtly,

Lastly, consider the great damage the very watching brings to your health, and in particular to your eyes, (for Gamesters work most by night) confirm'd by this Distick,

Allia, vina, venus, fumus, faba, lumen & ignis,
Ista nocent oculis, sed vigilare magis.

FINIS.

A penitent Sonnet, written by the Lord FITZ-GIRALD (a great Gamester) a little before his death, which was in the year 1580.

By loss in play men oft forget,
The duty they do owe,
To him that did bestow the same,
And thousand Millions moe.
I loath to hear them swear and stare
When they the Main have lost,
Forgetting all the Byes that wear,
With God and Holy Ghost.
By Wounds and Nayles they think to win,
But truly it is not so,
For all their frets and fumes in sin,
They moneyless must goe.
There is no Wight that us'd it more
Than he that wrote this Verse,
Who cries peccavie now therefore,
His Oathes his heart do pierce.
Therefore example take by me
That curse the luckless time
That ever Dice mine eyes did see
Which bred in me this crime,
Pardon me for that is past
I will offend no more,
In this most vile and sinful cast,
Which I will still abhor.

FINIS.

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